

JOHN ELDER HOUSE & BARN
HARRISBURG, PA.

H.A.B.S. No. PA-32

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District No. PA-3

Reduced Copies of the Historical Inventory

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
Julian Millard, District Officer
2250 No. Third St., Harrisburg, Pa.

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JOHN ELDER HOUSE And BARN

Paxtang Boro, near Harrisburg, Pa.
24th & Ellersley Sts.

OWNER: Charles B. Elder, and occupant. *Original Owner: Rev. John Elder*

DATE OF ERECTION: *House* 1740; ~~both~~ *house and* Barn 1744.

ARCHITECT: Unknown.

BUILDER: Unknown.

PRESENT CONDITION: House -- Has been altered almost beyond recognition, but the stone walls are unchanged.
Barn -- Very bad condition, will soon be a ruin.

NUMBER OF STORIES: Two and a half stories.

MATERIALS OF CONSTRUCTION: House -- Rough mountain stone walls, slate roof, interior plastered.
Barn -- Stone end walls and stable wall.
Others, vertical batten walls.

OTHER EXISTING RECORDS: "Historic Paxton" by Helen Bruce Wallace;
Egle's History of Dauphin County.

ADDITIONAL DATA: John Elder, born 1706 in Edinburgh, Scotland. He graduated from the University and studied Divinity and in 1732 was licensed to preach. His father, Robert Elder, in the meantime had come to America about 1730 and located in Paxtang.

John followed his father in 1737 and in 1738 accepted a call to Paxton Presbyterian Church at Paxtang, which was attached to Donegal Presbytery.

Rev. Elder, widely known as the Fighting Parson, was an active leader of his community. He superintended the discipline of his men, and his mounted rangers were widely known as the "Paxtang Boys." In 1763 he was commissioned Colonel by the Provincial authorities and was charged with the oversight of the string of block-houses and stockades from Easton to the Susquehanna during the Indian Wars. When word came that the British Army was over-running New Jersey, he organized a Company of Volunteers at Sunday Church Service. The Company marched the next day.

Charles Miner, historian, states as follows:- "I am greatly struck with the evidences of learning, talent and spirit displayed by him. He was a very extraordinary man of most extensive influence, full of activity and enterprise, learned, pious, and a ready writer." He was Pastor of Paxton Church until his widely lamented death at the age of 86 years. He is buried in Paxton Church Graveyard.

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He married twice, had fifteen children of whom several attained prominence:- Robert Elder was Colonel in the Indian Wars; Joshua Elder served in the Indian Wars and the Revolution, was Associate Judge, County Prothonotary for nine years and Burgess of Harrisburg in 1810; John Elder, Captain in the Revolution, County Sheriff for three years; Thomas Elder had a liberal schooling and studied Law with General John A. Hanna and was a distinguished member of the Bar for forty years, a Lieutenant-Colonel of the Militia, President of the Harrisburg Bank, Attorney-General of the Commonwealth - 1820 to 1823.

Julian Millard
District Officer